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Mission Adventures in Alaska

A 1000 Mile Yukon Expedition for Souls

Cruising a thousand miles on an evangelizing expedition among the Alaskan natives at the coast and Yukon missionary outposts, with storms and leaky boats as part of the daily grind, formed the "summer vacation" of some of the Alaskan mission Jesuits, according to an interesting letter just received from Father Francis Menager, who is stationed near Hooper Bay.

Outposts of Civilization

"Last year I was a tenderfoot," Father Menager writes, "and Father Delon, our superior, gave me a tenderfoot's camp. He sent me out to build a chapel at Kashunak, a dot on the fringe of the great plains of northeastern Alaska. I built the mission station and lived with the seal-fishers throughout the long arctic winter. There I taught the great truths of our holy Religion, learning the language as I went along, for at the outset I knew not a word of the language and could converse with no one except my catechist and interpreter, a young native and pupil of Holy Cross.

"Having won my spurs. I have two stations this year. Dear old Kashunak is one, the other—I haven't named the place yet—is also on Hooper Bay, some twenty miles north of Kashunak. It is a large place containing some two hundred souls.

Stuck in River Mud

"I just now came back from a thirty-two day cruise of a thousand miles to visit my new territory and start the building. What a cruise we had! We left Holy Cross with Father Delon as captain, a native boy as pilot, and myself as chief engineer in a two-ton river boat pulled by a Red Wing engine. I don't know if a black cat crossed our path, but the boat began at once to leak like a sieve, and we had to rush right back to port. Next evening we started full gas ahead, travelling day and night. Two hundred and fifty miles out from Holy Cross, with Chukartulik on our starboard, the boat began to leak like the old Titanic. The engineer and pilot manned the pump for all they were worth, while Father Delon bailed with a gas can, but we could not gain an inch on the water. We had to run into the shore. What a mud bank! There was not a bush in sight to tie to, not a stump on which to hitch a line in order that we might drag our boat up to get at the leaks; nor were we strong enough to pull it out of the water. All the natives had left from the country around to go fishing. Wait for some good Samaritan to chance along; that was our lot. Mud, mud everywhere, and water in our boat up to our ankles.

For a day and a half we sat there until George Shepherd, a young trader, made his appearance. He had a barge, a large crew and a lot of tools. Right way, in good Alaskan style, he put us on shore, got under our boat and found the leaks. Two nasty ones about a foot long and half an inch wide.

Fighting the Mosquitoes

"We were a sight; mud from head to foot. But in our joy to be off again aboard a dry boat, we did not mind. What would a Prince Albert coat, cuffs and white collar do up here where you have to do anything in a moment's notice, from deck hand to mud digger, from pilot to cook or wood chopper? Not even the swarms of fierce mosquitoes—sleep is hardly possible even under a mosquito netting, for their diabolical buzzing will keep even the tired man awake—could dampen our joy to be on our way.

Sand Bar Troubles

"If we were growing elated over our peaceful progress down the Chukartulik slough, our satisfaction quickly vanished. Long grass began to twine about our propeller and stop the engine every few minutes. So over the back of the boat I leaned to cut the grass away with a long knife. This lasted for almost half a day. Then we sailed nicely until we had almost crossed a large lake about one hundred miles from Kashunak. Towards dusk we got stuck on a sand bar. Try as we would we could not budge the boat. Happily, the tide came in from Bering sea and next morning to our great joy we found ourselves floating free.

"At Shevak we stopped to visit some of my parishioners who were there fishing. Happy to see us, they proudly showed the beads I had given them last winter. They also related the death of an old man whom I had baptized before leaving. It was a great consolation to think that I had been there just in time.

Catholic Natives

"Trouble again lurked ahead. Father Superior lifted the anchor and I started the engine, but no progress. The propeller refused to turn. To our consternation we noticed that the pin which binds the propeller to the shaft had slipped out. What were we to do? Looking around we found a bolt that would fit, and rivetted it in carefully. Down the Quikewik slough we then made our way right into the Bering sea. Again we had the happiness of meeting some of my old parishioners and seeing the fruits of last winter's labor. They were proud to show that they were Catholics.

Cruising on the Bering

"After a few minutes of inquiry we found the natives averse to our crossing the Bering sea in our old river tub. But this time they had good reason to fear. Before us lay a twenty mile stretch of extremely shallow water which the wind, without the least warning, could whip into an ocean of raging billows. The wind being low, however, we started out at once. It was my first ride on the Bering sea, and the reckless joy of adventure thrilled me. Then, too, how close we were to Russia. I recalled how I volunteered for that mission a few years ago. Soon things became interesting. Aeolius, the wanton old god of the winds, came out for a little frolic. Up and down and sideways we rolled and tossed. As there is no keel to our boat, we had an interesting time trying to hold to our course over those rising waves. But our Red Wing was faithful; after a couple of hours we drew into the harbor of Hooper Bay. Though the rain was pouring down in torrents, the Eskimoes were all out of doors to welcome us. Especially glad were they to see the big chief of the missions, Father Delon, and the pastor of Kashunak. This is the site of my new station. Father Keyes and Brother Hess were there in charge of the building. After a little chat, we went to see the plans. The church will be on a high plot of ground, the best spot, for here on the Bering sea coast the order of the day is rain, rain, and more rain.

Storm Delays Trip

"We hoped to start back that night, but—perhaps Father Keyes and Brother Hess prayed, as St. Scholastica once did, that their brothers should prolong the visit. We waited three days for the storm to abate. To have gone out would have meant certain death.

A Kashunak Welcome

"On our way back we stopped at many fishing camps where my parishioners were busily engaged catching their winter food. Everywhere

we kept a lookout for children wishing to go to our school at Holy Cross. We received the greatest welcome of all at Kashunak, my first mission. We arrived there at four o'clock in the morning; and when the natives heard the chug-chug of our engine they came running to the river bank. 'Chamai, chamai, kayangua tamgrmkin!' ('How do you do; I am glad to see you!'), they cried. Like children they crowded into our boat. Who could behold such a sincere welcome and remain unmoved! We said Mass, the natives assisting by their prayers and hymns. 'A year ago' I thought, 'these people were ignorant pagans who did not even know the Sign of the Cross, and now listen to them! Surely my prayers were not in vain.'

"After Mass we treated them to breakfast, a plate of corn meal, some crackers and a cup of coffee. Not much; but they were delighted with it. Some had run over six miles to see "Naze." That is about all they can get of my name.

Stranded on the Kughunak

"The Kughunak River, a slough or bayou of the Yukon, led us back to the great Yukon itself. All in all we had gathered twelve pupils, ranging in age from five to twenty-five. I cant' say which was the most interesting, to watch the crowds of friends and relatives on the bank waving good-bye or to gaze at the motley crew we had on board. They had never seen a gas engine before, nor had they ever seen the great river itself. Consequently, they plied me with questions beyond my halting, meagre Eskimo to answer. We travelled day and night, our passengers using the deck as a bed. All went well until we were twenty miles above Chukartulik, the two-hundred and fifty mile station from Holy Cross and the site of our old grief. There the magneto burned out! There we were stranded with twelve natives aboard and only a few pounds of rice and beans.

Breakfast in the Rain

"Fortunately, we had a cache of provisions at the place. Hence we decided to drift down to the deserted Chukartulik and await the mission boat which was due in a few days. The wind, however, drove us up the river instead. You can imagine what a time we had to pole the boat against the wind, for it took us three long days under a continuously pouring rain. The Eskimo character stood it well, though. The younsters helped manfully and good humoredly. At Chukartulik we tied up and waited—waited ten long days. Never have I had a more trying experience than this long period of forced inaction. To heighten our joy, the oil stove burned out and we had to cook in the rain. Such days teach us the consolation of Holy Mass and the new courage that it always gives.

Back to Holy Cross

"'A sail! A sail!' What a prayer of gratitude we sent up to heaven when Brother Laird appeared about nine in the evening. We immediately tie dour boat to his larger one. In three days the buildings of Holy Cross came in sight. My natives were terrified at sight of the Sisters. They huddled close up to me, crying, 'Stay with us; we are afraid!' Soon, however, they were disillusioned and willingly went to these women dressed in strange-looking black.

"I was delighted to get back for a little rest and an opportunity to answer my letters that have accumulated. In two weeks I shall be back at Kashunak on Hooper Bay, whence I shall not be able to write a letter for three months. Before I close, I want to thank my dear friends, one and all, for what they are doing for us. Without their help, work up here would be impossible."

New Missionary Post

A second letter, written by Father Menager on September 2, describes his proposed trip down the Yukon and out across the Bering sea to Hooper Bay, where a new outpost of missionary civilization is being opened up this fall among the native seal hunters in that district.

"In a few days I shall take my gasoline boat and a small barge, and start a 200 mile cruise down the Yukon," the letter reads; "and then down the Chukartulik river for a hundred more until I reach the Kashunak river. Down the Kashunak stream I'll sail for another 200 miles, then plough up the Kiouk slough for a meagre forty, out across the Bering sea for 25 miles—and then Hooper Bay, my new mission. The people at this new missionary station seem well disposed towards me. Of course, I can tell you more about it in my next letter after I have had

the opportunity of working among them for some time."

White Whales and Seals

Evangelization work on the Bering coast will not be without its element of adventure. Hooper Bay is right on the sea; hence, seals are plentiful, more so than at Kashunak, and it is said that white whales frequently come around.

"Right now though, I am very busy getting all my goods ready to put on the boat," the Father explains. "Believe me, it is quite a job, since everything has to be packed most carefully, otherwise the rain will soak everything. It rains here practically all the time at this season of the year.

"I am carrying with me on the boat my dog team of ten animals, a rather noisy company, you may be sure.

"Social Visits" in Winter

"Father Fox is now stationed at Kashunak. To visit him in winter, I have to cross the sea on the ice, and then, before the frost has set in, make my way for 70 miles through sloughs and river country until I reach the mission quarters at Kashunak. So you see that to be a missionary in Alaska one has to be a good boatman."

The Alaska missionary expresses his gratitude for the numerous necessaries that have been sent to him by fellow Jesuits in the Province, as well as by friends interested in the conversion of the inhabitants of our northernmost territory.

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El Retiro

Thief Burglarizes Sacristy

Working in full daylight during a recent week end retreat at El Retiro, a clever thief burglarized the sacristy and boldly made away with some of the sacred vessels while the retreatants were recreating quietly in the gardens outside.

The thief had been pilfering some of the churches in the Santa Clara valley. On Sunday morning, September 16, the men were about the grounds talking, Father Denis Mahoney being with some and Father Joseph R. Stack with the others. They all noticed a stranger nearby carrying a suitcase. Some of the men even spoke to him; and Father Stack himself watched the unostentatious stranger shuffle down the road.

Shortly afterwards, it was discovered that he had slipped into the sacristy and had robbed the place of two ciboriums and a chalice. In addition, he had clipped the jewels off the monstrance, effecting this job so cleverly that one could hardly notice it.

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Mount St. Michael's

Sodality Work Progresses

The Sodality academy program for the coming year aims to furnish the philosophers with a practical knowledge of sodality achievements, past and present. In order to secure the presence of all the philosophers, meetings are being held monthly and with a varied program at each assembly. At the September meeting, Father Louis Egan of Gonzaga university gave an interesting and instructive talk on the "Re-Awakening of the Sodality in the United States." The remaining academies will treat of the history of the sodality and how to organize a sodality; and several model meetings will be introduced with an eye to giving practical information to the philosophers on management and direction of modern-day sodalities. Practical hints and information on the sodality, with a summary of the year's work, have been bound and a copy given to each member. Mr. Neil P. McManus, is director, and Mr. Harold O. Small, secretary of the academy.

Stamps For Missions

The success of the stamp bureau of the Mission society last year in acquiring funds for our missions so encouraged the members that this year they have reorganized forces with the expectation of doing a land office business.

Mr. James C. Spils, the new president of the society, requests the cooperation of our houses and colleges in this work. Any and all kinds of stamps are wanted.

History Academy Meets

The history of the Catholic Church in England since the time of Henry VIII will be studied in a series of papers by the History academy this year. The first paper of the series, "Henry VIII and the Suppression of Catholicism," was read by Mr. Albert J. Muntsch at the initial meeting on September 30. Mr. Malcolm Mullen is director of the academy.

Aged Jubilarian Honored on Anniversary

Fifty years of chivalrous service in the Society of Jesus received their reward last month when old pupils and fellow religious paid reverent homage to Father Henry Woods, convert, educator, apostle and priest of God, who has rounded out the half-century mark as a Jesuit. Father Woods was received into the Society on August 16, 1878, at the age of 24.

Solemn Jubilee Mass

Catholic dignitaries from many parts of the west gathered at the university of Santa Clara on Sunday, August 19, to attend the solemn Mass sung by the aged jubilarian himself as part of the jubilee celebration in his honor. Father Woods is librarian and professor emeritus of ethics at the university.

The solemn High Mass began at 11 o'clock. The jubilarian was assisted by Father William Boland, rector of Seattle college, Father John Lennon, former dean of studies at Santa Clara, and Father John P. Mootz. The sermon was delivered by Father Zacheus J. Maher, former president of Santa Clara.

Reception in Gymnasium

A reception in the lounge room of Seifert gymnasium was held, following a luncheon. Among the clergy present were Father H. A. Ayrinac, president of the Catholic seminary at Menlo Park, Father Edward Whelan, president of St. Ignatius college; Father Leo Simpson, rector of the Sacred Heart novitiate, and Rev. Father C. J. McCoy, president of the university.

Alumni of both Santa Clara and St. Ignatius university in San Francisco paid their respects to their old professor at a dinner in the latter city on September 26.

Convert to Church

Father Woods was born on April 27, 1854, in London, the son of a clergyman of the Church of England. In 1860 the family moved to British Columbia, where, as a young man Henry Woods entered the employ of the bank of British Columbia. While still a young man, he was sent by his company to San Francisco.

It was in this city that Henry Woods entered the Catholic Church. He was baptized on March 4, 1877, and entered the Society at Santa Clara 18 months later.

Works on "America"

For 12 years he was vice-president of St. Ignatius college. From 1909 to 1914 he was associate editor of "America," afterward returning to be instructor at the Sacred Heart novitiate. In 1921 he was made professor of ethics at Santa Clara, where a year ago he was made professor emeritus.

Among the many telegrams of felicitation received by Father Woods was one from Very Reverend Father General.

Bellarmine College

Large Enrollment

Classes began on September 4 at the new Bellarmine high school with a substantial increase in enrollment over that of previous years, the student body now numbering about 150 boys.

New Dramatic Club

A new dramatic club has been organized by Father Joseph Lynch, director of dramatics. The club plans to stage two plays this year, one a comedy, to be staged sometime before the Christmas holidays, and the other a farce, which will be produced in the spring.

Marquette Hall

Registration Is Large

The registration at Marquette Hall, Yakima, Wash., this year surpasses that of any previous year, 77 having enrolled to date. It is expected that the final total enrollment will exceed 80.

Father Leo. F. McGreal is the principal. He is assisted by Mr. William Ryan and Mr. John Baud, scholastics.

School Organizations

Mr. Ryan has charge of the sanctuary society this year, while Mr. Baud, as director of the sodality, will endeavor to maintain the high

standard set last year.

High School Improvements

Extensive building alterations have been made at Marquette this year, resulting in the complete separation of the high school department from the grammar grades. The improvements include four new classrooms which have been made in what was formerly the school auditorium.

China Contingent Writes From Yokohama

Writing on board the "President Lincoln" as the liner slowly steamed towards Yokohama harbor, members of the province's first mission delegation to the orient report a successful trip across the Pacific, with little to break the monotony of ocean travel except the anticipation of their future evangelization enterprise.

"We have had an exceptionally calm and peaceful voyage," states a letter from Mr. Thomas Phillips, one of the three scholastics in the group, "peaceful, indeed, if we may credit some of the old timers on board. The barber told me the other day that on the last trip out, this boat was reported lost for 36 hours. The same night the ship's crew received six S. O. S. calls, but were unable to go to the assistance of any of them. Four Japanese ships either grounded on the rocks or sank.

Crawling Towards Yokohama

"Today we are just crawling along so as not to arrive in Yokohama before schedule time. I feel as though I could go faster were I to get out and row. Even the flying fish no longer seem to be in a hurry to get out of the way. They come out and glide along the surface of the water, leisurely and lazily.

Hawaiian Visit Pleasant

"We spent a wonderful day in Honolulu; wonderful in many ways. The Catholic boys we met there are real Catholics. They are proud of their Faith, and they show it. Father Moore's friend met us at the pier. He was accompanied by three other young fellows. They escorted Father Moore and Mr. Lynch in their car, while Clarence Chong and Louis Ching took care of Mr. Simons and myself. They are not fullblooded Chinese. Indeed, here in Hawaii, you will find every conceivable race mixture of Chinese, Hawaiian and Phillippine blood.

"The island itself is one huge garden. No jutting rocks or patches of clay mar the soft beauty of the hills. A rich green carpet stretches from the beaches up to the very peaks of the mountains."

Gonzaga University

Course in Bacteriology

Gonzaga univeristy will open a full year's course in general bacteriology this year.

Classes will be held evenings and will be offered to pre-medical students and as an elective to college students and those enrolled in the night courses for men and women. The course will treat of the technique in growing and examining bacteria and their identification as applied to health and disease.

Dr. Robert Stier of the Hollister-Stier laboratories here will direct the course. Dr. Stier is well known in the northwest for his research work in hay fever and asthma and for the past eight years has been bacteriologist at St. Luke's hospital. He is a graduate of Columbia university, New York, and was pathologist at the Presbyterian and Metropolitan hospitals there.

School of Education

Another department at Gonzaga has been advanced to the standing of university faculties with the systematization this year of the new school of education under the supervision of Mr. Maurice Flaherty. The school of education will offer to the undergraduate students all the work required by the state for teachers' certificates. This includes training in educational psychology, administration, and secondary education. Saturday and evening courses have also been inaugurated for the advantage of Spokane teachers.

For a number of years teacher-training courses have been offered

by the university and with such efficiency as to merit the rating of "Class A" with the state board of education at Olympia, but this year, by the introduction of graduate courses and the addition of an excellent library, the work has been made attractive for teachers and advanced students in the educational field.

The Goller memorial, a teachers' reference library established at the university several years ago, has been substantially augmented and made available for students in the educational courses. It contains approximately 2000 volumes, besides the current periodicals in educational work.

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Loyola College

Civic Drive Begins

The civic campaign to raise $4,000,000 for the construction of the proposed group of Loyola university buildings was officially inaugurated at a large downtown dinner on the evening of October 4, at which approximately 1000 campaign workers and friends of the Jesuit institution pledged their support to make the huge financial enterprise a success.

Lectures in Philosophy

A large gathering of Catholic Daughters of America, Angelicus Court, greeted Father George G. Fox, of Loyola, at the regular meeting on September 24, when he outlined the course in philosophy which he will give to the Los Angeles court. The first lecture on October 8 will deal with logic.

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Santa Clara

Jesuit Seismological Meet

The annual national conference of Jesuit scientists was held at Santa Clara this summer. A careful study was made of the San Andreas rift, with special reference to any change since 1906. The stretch between Santa Clara and San Francisco and between Bolinas Bay and Point Reyes was also inspected. Father Macelwayne of St. Louis university and president of the Jesuit association of seismologists was in charge of the meeting.

Noted Historian Visits

Father Mariano Cuevas, S. J. prominent writer and author of a History of the Catholic Church in Mexico, was recently in retreat at the university. In the near future, a series of lectures on the history of Mexico is scheduled to be given in San Francisco by Father Cuevas.

Pedestals For Chapel

Miss Nellie Connors of San Francisco has donated two beautiful pedestals for the statues of St. Anthony and St. Stanislaus in the Mission chapel. The university some years ago received the above mentioned statue of the Saint of Padua from the same generous donor.

New Ricard Observatory

Workmen are rapidly completing the excavation of the subterranean vault near the Ricard observatory. Upon its finish the vault will house the new seismograph recently ordered by Father Jerome X Ricard for his study of earthquakes.

The pit, when fully constructed, will be 25 feet in length and 17 feet wide and eight feet in depth. The top of the vault will be four feet below the surface of the ground, and will be covered by the soil: It will be of reinforced concrete, and a concrete passageway will connect it with the basement of the observatory.

Mission Chapel Enriched

Many personal donations have come to the Mission chapel in the form of gifts and labor. Mr. H. Dowie, an expert in statue painting, has completely restored the original colors of some of the Mission's old statuary. He has also donated a painting of St. Aloysius and an old Spanish chalice.

Coin Collection Donated

Mrs. Lina McCuen of San Diego recently left a large collection of coins, minerals, and other curios to the university for the museum that will some day adorn the campus. The collection was a part of the gatherings of years which the donor's husband, Mr. James McCuen, had made.

New Astronomical Equipment

Upon the death several months ago of H. C. Williams of San Francisco, manufacturer of optical and astronomical instruments, the university received an entire set of mechanical appliances which are required for the repair of apparatus peculiar to the field of astronomy.

These instruments, once the property of the man who built the 18½ inch refractor for the Ricard observatory, are now in store at the Service building.

Alaska Missionaries

The Alaska missionary ranks were augmented this summer by the arrival of three priests, Father Francis Prange, Father Aloysius Willebrand and Father Gabriel Menager.

Father Prange will be in charge of a newly-founded mission on Hooper Bay, 200 miles from Kashunak. Father Willebrand's destination is Nulato, while Father Menager will be stationed at Juneau.

News Jottings From Other Provinces

MARYLAND-NEW YORK

New Provincial—Father Edward C. Phillips succeeds Father Laurence J. Kelly as head of the province. Father Phillips has been director of the astronomical observatory at Georgetown University for the past four years. Before that he was prefect of studies at Woodstock where he also taught astronomy and geology. During the summer he attended astronomical conferences in Holland and Germany. After a prolonged visit to Rome he returned to this country and was made provincial on September 12.

MISSOURI

Convention—On August 17 the Catholic Students Leadership convention called by Father Daniel A. Lord began its three day session in the St. Louis university auditorium with an attendance of over a thousand student delegates and 400 faculty members from all parts of the United States. Questions of vital interest to the Sodality and American youth in general were freely discussed.

Property Donated — A tract of land, approximately 100 acres on the Dettroit Nine-mile road, was given to the Missouri province by John and Michael Dinan as a site for the proposed new theologate.

NEW ORLEANS

New Provincial—Father John M. Salter, former master of novices, was appointed provincial on June 26 to succeed Father Cummings.

UPPER CANADA

Martyrs' Shrine—The number of pilgrims to the Shrine of Martyrs is daily increasisg. On July 29 a pilgrimage of over a thousand people arrived from Hamilton, Ontario.

GERMANY

University Recognized—Since May 10 the Catholic University of Tokyo conducted by our Fathers, has the formal recognition of the Japanese Government.

Philosophate Damaged—The philosophate of the Lower German province at Pullach suffered greatly from a hailstorm on June 10. Hailstones, some of which were as large as hen eggs, broke about 600 window panes and 15,000 roof tiles.

IRELAND

Retreats—The number of retreatants taking part in the exercises at the retreat house at Rathfarnham from January to July, 1928, was 1,552, of whom 1263 were men and 289 boys. Fram August, 1927, to July, 1928, a total of 2,494 men and boys made the retreat.

Irish Jesuits—The retreat house at Rathfarnham was converted into an Irish college for a period of four weeks, beginning July 16. A superior and Gaelic beadle were appointed and all juniors with permission migrated to the new building. The fundamental rule was that no other than the Irish language was to be "the language of the country." The Feast of St. Ignatius was the sole exception to this rule.

Obituary

FATHER ANTHONY KEYES

Word has recently been received from Alaska announcing the death of Father Anthony Keyes (Chiavassa) on October 1, at Mountain Village. Father Keyes was born June 15, 1866, and entered the Society September 22, 1882. Of his 46 years in the society, about 27 were spent in arduous missionary duties on the Yukon.

R. I. P.